

Nongame Freshwater Fishing

General Information

Nongame fishing permits and tags may be purchased from SCDNR only. Application may be obtained at www.scdnr.state.sc.us or by calling 803-734-3833.

Nongame fishing permits and tags are required, in addition to a valid South Carolina state fishing license (also applies to youth under 16), to use the following devices for recreational purposes: up to 3 trotlines with not more than 150 hooks, 3 to 50 set hooks, 3 to 50 jugs, up to 2 traps, 1 hoop net, 1 gill net no more than 200 yards in length or 5 gill nets, none of which exceed 30 yards in length, 1 skimbrow net, 1 seine, 1 minnow seine, or up to 2 eel pots.

This requirement applies to all freshwaters of the state inland of the saltwater-freshwater dividing lines, except privately-owned ponds.

Nongame fishing devices are not allowed in certain waters. The maximum number of devices allowed per area are shown in the Areas & Limits Section on page 22.

A tag must be attached to the device for which it was issued, and each permit and tag identification receipt must be in the licensee's possession while engaging in the activity.

Game fish must be immediately released if caught by net or trap or any other device used for catching nongame fish.

Commercial Fishing

A commercial freshwater fishing license must be in possession to take catfish by any method from public waters and sell or offer for sale such catfish, and/or fish with the following nongame fishing devices: 2 or more gill nets (or 5 gill nets not more than 30 ft. in length), 2 or more hoop nets, 3 or more traps, trotlines with a combined total of 151 hooks or more, or 3 or more eel pots.

All persons involved in commercial catfish fishing must have a commercial freshwater fishing license if they participate in any way in the actual fishing operation. This includes, but is not limited to, operating a boat, baiting hooks, removing fish from lines, traps or nets.

To qualify for a resident commercial freshwater fishing license, one must have been a resident of this state for the past 12 consecutive months and furnish proof to the SCDNR.

Shad/Herring

To take shad for recreational purposes by hook and line, cast net, or skim bow net in freshwaters a person must have a freshwater fishing license. For other allowances and restrictions, see page 26. Commercial fishing for shad and herring in freshwaters including for sale as bait and by use of gill nets is regulated under saltwater fisheries laws regardless of location within the state

(Sec. 50-5-1500 and 50-5-1550). Contact the Charleston License office at (803) 953-9309 for commercial and gill net information.

Nongame Freshwater Fishing Methods & Devices

Some devices are not permitted on certain waters. See Area & Limits on page 22 for devices and limits allowed in each area.

Set Hooks

Description: A single hook and line attached to bushes, limbs, poles, sticks or similar structures. **Permits/Regulations:** A permit is required to fish 3 to 50 hooks (50 hook limit). A label bearing the owner's name and address must be attached to each set hook.

Persons 65 years or older or under age 16 are not required to purchase a Set Hook Permit, but a label with their name, address and age must be attached to each set hook. A fishing license is required. A permit is not required for 2 set hooks with a valid state fishing license.

Hours/Seasons: Must be removed prior to one hour after official sunrise each day and cannot be reattached prior to one hour before official sunset.

Jugs

Description: A single hook and line attached to a free-floating device with a minimum capacity of one pint and a maximum of one gallon. May not have more than one line.

Permits/Regulations: A permit is required to fish 3 to 50 jugs (50 jug limit). Licensee's name and address must be clearly marked on each jug. Jug fishing is legal only in Lakes Greenwood, Secession, Richard B. Russell, Thurmond, and Stevens Creek. *A permit is not required for 2 jugs with a valid state fishing license.*

Hours/Seasons: Must be removed from the water before one hour after official sunrise each day and not replaced prior to one hour before official sunset.

Trotlines

Description: 2 or more hooks attached to a line which is rigged horizontally and marked with a white or yellow floating marker (See Markers and Identification on page 21). Stainless steel hooks are prohibited statewide. *Hooks used in Lakes Marion and Moultrie ONLY must measure 7/16 inch or less between point and shank.*

Permits/Regulations: A tag is required for each trotline with up to 50 hooks. Trotlines with more than 50 hooks requires a tag for every 50 hooks or less. No trotline shall be attached in any man-

ner to another trotline or to the support or float of another trotline. No trotlines allowed within 100 feet of the mouth of any tributary stream.

Hours/Seasons: Trotlines must be inspected and fish removed at least every 24 hours. From Apr. 1 to Oct. 1, no trotline is permitted in any waters from one hour after official sunrise to one hour before official sunset, unless the trotline is sunk to the bottom or a minimum depth of four feet below the surface. From Oct. 2 to Mar. 31, trotlines may be left in the water 24 hours per day at any depth.

Traps & Eel Pots

Description: A device (as described below and on the following page) marked with a white or yellow floating marker (See Markers and Identification on page 21).

Permits/Regulations: A tag is required for each trap or eel pot. A permit is required for the harvest of eels in both freshwater and saltwater. Traps and eel pots may be suspended in water at a depth which does not create a hazard to watercraft. No trap or eel pot shall be placed within 100 feet of the mouth of any tributary stream. No crab pot or trap of like design may be used in the fresh waters of this state.

Hours/seasons: No closed season.

Trap Type 1 - *The trap may be made of wire or textile material and be cylindrical in shape of a length not more than 6 feet and a width of not more than 3 feet. The mesh shall not be smaller than 1 inch by 1 inch, and there shall be only one application of exterior wire to the trap. The muzzle shall have one of the following designs: A trap door on the second muzzle or catch muzzle which remains in a closed position and which only opens for the entry of fish into the trap; or constructed of netting so that the opening of the small end of the second muzzle or catch muzzle is held in the shape of a slit and the trap configuration constructed such that as the trap rests on the bottom, the slit shall be oriented horizontally with the greatest vertical opening being no greater than 1 inch.*

Trap Type 2 - *The trap may be made of wood strips or slats and be cylindrical or rectangular in shape. The length shall not exceed 6 feet, and the width or diameter shall not exceed 2 feet. The throat opening of the catch muzzle in a resting position shall not exceed 3 inches measured in any direction. The sides, top and rear of the trap shall have a minimum of one inch opening between the slats to allow for the escape of small catfish. This shall apply only to the last 12 inches of the trap.*

Eel pot - *Pots no larger than 24 inches by 48 inches and constructed of wire with a mesh size no smaller than 1/2 by 1/2 inch, except for the throat or muzzle and the end opposite the throat or muzzle. The throat opening shall not exceed 2 inches measured in any direction.*

Hoop Nets

Description: Nets made of textile netting (no wire) of a mesh size between 1 and 2 inches square enclosing a series of round hoops with two or more muzzle openings made of a netting material. The maximum size net allowed is 16 feet by 5 1/2 feet.

Permits/Regulations: Hoop nets must rest on the bottom and cannot be placed within 100 feet of the mouth of any tributary stream.

Hours/Seasons: No closed season.

Gill Nets

Description: Nets with a mesh size greater than 4 1/2 inches stretch mesh. The maximum length is 200 yards and no net, cable, line or other device used for support of the gill net can extend more than halfway across the stream or body of water. Nets must be marked with a white or yellow floating marker (See Markers and Identification).

Permits/Regulations: Gill nets shall be placed on a first-come basis, and no net can be placed within 200 yards of another gill net.

Hours/Seasons: The season for taking nongame fish other than shad and herring is Nov. 1 to Mar. 1 (where authorized) on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays only. Fishing time begins at 12:01 am on Wednesday, and ends at midnight on Saturday.

Other Devices

Descriptions: Devices described in this section may be used in any body of fresh water including tributaries of rivers or creeks except in prohibited areas. A state fishing license is required (Lakes & Reservoir Permits are not valid). Tags are not required.

- **Bows and Arrows, Spears, Gigs & Cast Nets**
- **Skimbow Net** - A hand-operated dip net with the bow constructed of wood or metal with wire or textile netting with a mesh size not greater than 1 1/2 inches square. The bow shall not exceed 6 feet in any direction and may be used only from February through April 30 for shad or herring.
- **Minnow Seine** - Must not be greater than four feet in width by 20 feet in length with a mesh size of not more than 1/4 inch square mesh. It is unlawful to have in possession a minnow seine from 10 PM to official sunrise.
- **Tires** - Must not exceed 20-inch rim. Rules and regulations of power companies may not allow for the placing of tires.
- **Seine** - A net having a stretch mesh of not less than 1 inch and not more than 1 1/2 inches which does not exceed 75 feet in length or 6 feet in depth. It shall be unlawful to anchor a seine and leave it unattended.

Regulations

Markers and Identification

Trotlines, Traps, Eel Pots and Gill Nets must be marked with a floating marker with a minimum capacity of one pint and a maximum capacity of one gallon or equivalent size and must be made of solid, buoyant material which does not sink if punctured or cracked. The floating markers must be constructed of plastic, PVC Sponges, plastic foam or cork. No hollow buoys or floats including plastic, metal or glass bottles or jugs may be used except manufactured buoys or floats specifically designed for use with nongame fishing devices; these may be hollow if constructed of heavy duty plastic material and approved by the SCDNR. The floating markers must be colored white when used the 1st through the 15th of the month and yellow when used the remainder of the month. The owner's name and address must be marked clearly on each floating marker.

Hoop Nets set on the Congaree River from the I-77 Bridge to the confluence of the Congaree and Wateree rivers must also be marked with the same floating markers as listed above.

Bait

No game fish, live bait or any bait other than bait listed below shall be used with trotlines, set hooks and jugs: soap, doughballs, cut fish (nongame fish cut into at least three equal parts), shrimp, grapes or meat scraps (shall not include insects, worms and other invertebrates).

On the Edisto, Black, Sampit, Big Pee Dee, Little Pee Dee, Lumber and Waccamaw rivers, live nongame fish and bream may be used with single-barbed set hooks and trotlines that have a shank-to-point gap of one and three-sixteenths inches or greater.

On the Black, Big Pee Dee, Little Pee Dee, Lumber and Waccamaw rivers, live nongame fish and bream may be used on trotlines having not more than 20 hooks with a shank-to-point gap of one and three-sixteenths inches.

Game fish used as bait must be included in daily creel limit, 30 bream per day (see pg. 18).

There are no restrictions on the type of bait permissible in traps or eel pots except that no game fish or parts thereof shall be used as bait.

Prohibited Areas

No nongame fishing devices of any kind may be used in SCDNR-managed lakes (as listed on page 18), Monticello Reservoir, Monticello Reservoir Sub-Impoundment or waters above the Norfolk Southern Railroad track in Greenville, Pickens and Oconee counties, except in Lakes Hartwell and Keowee and Twelve-Mile Creek.

Prohibited Practices

Possession or use on the freshwaters of this state of any device or gear designed or used to catch nongame fish not authorized by law is prohibited.

Possession of game fish or tackle designed to catch game fish is prohibited while fishing traps, trotlines, or other nongame fish devices except cast nets and bows and arrows.

It is unlawful for any person to tamper with, fish, or use in any manner the nongame fishing device or gear owned and tagged by another person, or to take from any such device or gear, any fish caught thereon. No fishing device shall be used, placed, set or fished so as to create a hazard to boating.

No trotlines, traps or eel pots shall be placed within 200 yards of any permanent man-made structure on Lakes Marion and Moultrie nor placed anywhere in the Diversion Canal connecting Lakes Marion and Moultrie, the Tailrace Canal nor the area known as the Borrow Pit (also known as "Bar Pit") in Clarendon County.

Penalties

The boat, motor, fishing gear and fish of any person who is charged with unlawfully fishing, using or having in possession a gill net or hoop net on any freshwater lake or reservoir shall be confiscated.

Any person who tampers with any non-game fishing device with intent to damage or to make it ineffective for the purpose of taking fish shall be fined not less than \$100 nor more than \$200 or imprisoned for not more than 30 days, and for stealing a device or fish caught in the device shall be fined not less than \$500 nor more than \$1,000 or imprisoned for not more than 6 months or both.

Upon the conviction of any commercial freshwater fisherman of illegal possession of game fish or the sale or traffic in game fish, SCDNR shall suspend such person's license or privilege to fish in this state for a period of one year.

Up-to-date regulations and information are provided when nongame tags and or permits are purchased. Tags, permits and Commercial Freshwater Fishing License must be purchased from the Columbia Office in person or by writing: FISH TAGS, PO Box 11710, Columbia, SC 29211. An application may be obtained at www.scdnr.state.sc.us or by calling DNR at (803) 734-3833.



NONGAME AREAS & LIMITS

*Described limits are the maximum number of nongame devices allowed per license holder.

Ashepool River:

Set hooks - 50

Eel pots - No limit

Ashley River:

Set hooks - 50

Eel pots - No limit

Big Pee Dee River-See Great Pee Dee River

Black Creek-Darlington, Florence & Chesterfield Cos:

(Lakes Robinson & Prestwood)

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Black River:

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Broad River: Includes the waters from the North Carolina state line to the confluence of the Broad and Saluda rivers.

Traps 5*

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Set hooks-50

Seines-1 (from Hwy 34 bridge upstream)

Bull Creek-Horry & Georgetown Counties:

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Nongame gill nets in season

Eel pots-No limit

Traps-50*

Buffalo Creek:

Seines-1

Bush River-Laurens Co:

Seines-1

Combahee River:

Set hooks-50

Eel pots-No limit

Congaree River: From the Gervais Street Bridge in Columbia to the I-77 Bridge in Columbia.

Traps-50*

Trotlines-2000 hooks total*

Hoop nets-50 w/commercial lic.

Congaree River: From the I-77 Bridge to confluence of the Congaree and Wateree rivers.

Traps-10 max. w/ commercial lic.

Trotlines-2000 hooks total*

Hoop nets-10 w/commercial lic.

(see Markers & Identification)

Set hooks-50

Cooper River: Traps, trotlines, set hooks and eel pots are not permitted upstream from Wadboo Creek

Traps-50*

Trotline-150 hooks total

Fyke Nets-As allowed for eel fishing by regulation

Set hooks-50

Eel pots-No limit

Pump nets-No limit

Coosawhatchie & Tullifinny rivers:

Set hooks-50

Mallards Lake- Dorchester Co:

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Mims Lake- Dorchester Co:

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Shuler Lake- Dorchester Co:

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Woods Lake- Dorchester Co:

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Bridge Lake- Dorchester Co.:

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Little Pond Lake- Dorchester Co.:

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Steed's Lake-Dorchester Co:

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

John's Hole Lake-Dorchester Co:

Nongamegill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Rock's Lake-Dorchester Co:

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Mouth of Four Holes Lake-

Dorchester Co:

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Durbin Creek:

Seines-1

Edisto River:

Set hooks-50

Eel pots-no limit

Enoree River:

Traps-2

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Set hooks-50

Seines-1 from Southern Railroad in Greenville Co. downstream

Great Pee Dee River: From I-95 to NC state line.

Traps-50*

Trotlines-2000 hooks total*

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Hoop nets-50 w/commercial lic.

North of SC 34 only

Great Pee Dee River: From I-95 to the saltwater line.

Nongame gill nets in season

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Set hooks-50

Eel pots-Below Highway 701 bridge only, no limit

Traps-50*

Jefferies Creek-Florence Co:

Nongame gill nets in season

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Lake Greenwood:

Traps-5*

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Jugs-50

Lake Hartwell:

Traps-5*

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Lake Jocassee:

All nongame devices prohibited, including cast nets.

Lake Keowee:

Traps-5*

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Lakes Marion and Moultrie:

Waters between confluence of Wateree and Congaree rivers and backwaters of Lake Marion are considered a part of Lake Marion.

Traps-50*

Trotlines-2000 hooks total*

Lake Murray:

Traps-5*

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Lake Richard B. Russell:

Traps-5*

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Jugs-50

Lake Secession:

Traps-2

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Jugs-50

Lake Thurmond & Stevens Creek

Reservoir:

Traps-5*

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Jugs-50

Lake Wateree:

Traps-5*

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Catawba River: From Lake Wylie

Dam to the backwaters of Lake Wateree, including all reservoirs.

Traps-2

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Set hooks-50

Seines-1 in York Co. only

Lake Wylie:

Traps-5*

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Little River:

Seines-1 from Mars Bridge in

McCormick Co. upstream

Little Pee Dee River:

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Log Creek

Edgefield Co:

Seines-1

Long Cane Creek:

Above Patterson

Bridge

Seines-1

Louder's Lake

Darlington Co:

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Lumber River:

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Lynches River:

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Monticello Res. & Sub-Impound.

Nongame devices prohibited

Mulberry Creek

Greenwood Co:

Seines-1

New River:

Set hooks-50

Old River:

Set hooks-50

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Pacolet River:

Traps-2

Set hooks-50

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Seines-1

Rabon Creek in Laurens Co:

Seines-1

Redbank Creek

Saluda Co. west of

Highway 121:

Seines-1

Reedy River:

Traps-2

Set hooks-50

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Seines-1 from Southern RR in

Greenville Co. downstream

Rocky River

Anderson Co:

Seines-1

Salkehatchie River:

Set hooks-50

Saluda River: From Southern RR

Trestle in Greenville Co. to backwaters of Lake Greenwood and from

Lake Greenwood Dam to backwaters

of Lake Murray.

Traps-2

Set hooks-50

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Seines-1 in Anderson, Laurens and Greenville cos. only except in Anderson

Co. seines may be used in river tributaries.

Saluda River: From Lake Murray

Dam to the Gervais St. Bridge in Columbia.

Traps-2

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Sampit River:

Nongame gill nets in season

Traps-50*

Set hooks-50

Santee River: downstream from Wilson Dam on Lake Marion. No

nongame gear (except skimbrow nets) allowed upstream of U.S.G.S. Gauging

Station 1715 about 2.4 miles below Santee Dam.

Traps-50*

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Eel pots-No limit

Savannah River: Below Stevens Creek

Dam.

Traps-50*

Hoop nets-50 w/commercial lic.

Set hooks-50

Nongame gill nets in season

Trotlines-2000 hooks total*

Eel pots-No limit

Stevens Creek: Above Clark's Hill

Bridge.

Seines-1

Thicketty Creek

Cherokee Co.:

Seines-1

Turkey Creek

Edgefield & Greenwood

Cos.

Seines-1

Twelve-Mile Creek:

Traps-2

Set hooks-50

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Tyger River:

Traps-2

Set hooks-50

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Seines-1

Waccamaw River:

Trotlines-150 hooks total*

Nongame gill nets in season

Set hooks-50

Eel pots-No limit below junction of

Big Bull Creek

Warrior Creek

Laurens Co:

Seines-1

Wateree River:

Traps-50*

Set hooks-50

Trotlines-2000 hooks total*

Hoop nets-50 w/commercial lic.

Wilson Creek

Greenwood Co:

Seines-1